



Master Thesis:

**Generational Differences in Employee Change Readiness: A  
Comparative Study**

By

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### **Abstract**

Organizations must adapt to change for long-term success. Change readiness, or employees' willingness to embrace change, is influenced by various factors including generational characteristics. However, empirical research on this remains limited, and no study has examined four generations simultaneously. Existing findings on generational differences are also inconsistent. This study investigates how generational characteristics influence change readiness, focusing on the mediating role of generational values. A quantitative approach was applied using ANCOVA, regression, mediation analysis, and post-hoc tests. Data were collected through an online survey measuring generational values, change readiness, change history, openness to change, and openness to experience. Significant generational differences in change readiness were found ( $p < 0.05$ ). Baby Boomers showed the lowest levels, followed by Generation X, while Millennials and Gen Z exhibited the highest level of change readiness. Openness to change mediates this relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ), suggesting it explains generational differences in change readiness. However, generational values do not mediate this effect ( $p > 0.05$ ). Change readiness varies across generations, primarily due to differences in openness to change. Organizations should recognize these generational patterns and adjust change strategies accordingly. Understanding how openness to change shapes generational change readiness can help develop more targeted change management approaches. Future research should further explore the role of openness to change in this context.

#### *Keywords:*

Change readiness, generations, organizational change, openness to change, generational values.

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## **1 Introduction**

Organizational change has become a ubiquitous challenge for modern businesses aiming to remain competitive and adaptable in a rapidly evolving global environment (Madsen et al., 2005; Sveningsson, 2019). Effectively managing and implementing change initiatives is widely recognized as a critical determinant of organizational success (Armenakis et al., 1993; Holt & Vardaman, 2013). Central to this capability is the concept of change readiness - defined as the extent to which individuals within an organization are mentally and emotionally prepared to embrace and adopt change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Holt et al., 2007). Successful organizational change hinges on employees' change readiness, since they represent the most essential and challenging factor in the process of organizational change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Rashid et al., 2004; Kiranti et al., 2024).

Numerous factors influence change readiness, ranging from leadership styles and communication to change history (Armenakis et al., 1993; Lewis, 2006; Oreg et al., 2011; Rafferty & Restubog, 2017; Venkatesh et al., 2003;). Despite extensive research into these antecedents, one critical perspective that has received insufficient attention until recently is the role of generational differences in employees' change readiness (Madsen et al., 2005; Ng & Parry, 2016; Rafferty et al., 2013; Sullivan, 2018).

The current workforce consists of multiple generations, including Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z, each characterized by distinct values, attitudes, and behaviors that can influence their change readiness to participate in organizational change (Bourne, 2009; Delcampo et al., 2017; Jones, 2017; Stanley, 2010). Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, currently represent the last generation of employees approaching retirement age (Gursoy et al., 2008; Jeffries & Hunte, 2004; Jones, 2017; Schullery, 2013; Wiedmer, 2015). Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, and Millennials, born between 1981 and 1994, form the middle generations in today's workforce (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Stanley, 2010). Gen Z, born between 1995 and 2010, represents the youngest generation entering and shaping the labor market (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Goh & Lee, 2018; Kiranti et al., 2024; Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2016; Schawbel, 2014; Seemiller & Grace, 2015). These generational cohorts exhibit unique values, attitudes and behaviors that may influence their change readiness as employees to participate in organizational change (Beaman, 2012; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016).

Studies demonstrate variations in responses to change across different generations (Adatsi, 2020; Bourne, 2009; Dolot, 2018; Glass, 2007; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016). For example, Adatsi (2020) found no significant relationship between generational cohorts and change readiness, while Bourne (2009) found that Baby Boomers are generally more resistant to change, whereas other generations tend to be more accepting. Armenakis et al. (1993) and Bouckennooghe et al. (2009) emphasize that employees' reactions to change play a crucial role in determining their change readiness. Nonetheless, there remains a lack of detailed insight into how these reactions manifest in terms of change readiness among employees. Furthermore, empirical research on generational differences in the workplace is limited (Adatsi, 2020; Bourne, 2009). This study aims to fill this gap with the following research question:

*How do generational characteristics influence employees' change readiness in an organization?*

This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how generational differences influence change readiness within organizations, aligning with Change Readiness Theory (Holt et al., 2007). It enhances knowledge on generational differences in the field of change readiness and provides new insights how various generations perceive and react to change initiatives. This enables organizations to develop strategies tailored to different generations, enhancing their effectiveness in managing changes and strengthening intergenerational collaboration (Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016). Moreover, understanding the drivers and motivators behind change readiness empowers leaders and managers to make more effective strategic decisions taking into account the generational difference present in their employee workforce (Stanley, 2010), thereby promoting a positive organizational culture and improving overall performance and resilience in a rapidly changing environment (Burke, 2023; Hiatt, 2006; Kotter, 1996).

This thesis is structured into five chapters, including this introduction chapter. The second chapter provides a literature review, offering a deeper understanding of the key variables and theories. The third chapter outlines the research methodology, including the strategy, data collection, and analysis. The fourth chapter presents the results, followed by the fifth chapter, which discusses the main findings, theoretical and practical implications, limitations and directions for future research, and the answer to the research question.

## **2 Literature Review**

This chapter provides the theoretical background of the study. The following topics are discussed in detail: generations and the four corresponding generations, namely Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z. Additionally, change management and change readiness are addressed, including definition, theoretical framework, and the role of openness to change. The concept of generational change readiness is then explored. Finally, the theoretical model and hypotheses of this study are presented in a schematic overview.

### **2.1 Generations**

A generation is characterized as a cohort of individuals of similar age and social context who experience common social events (Mannheim, 1952). Kupperschmidt (2000) offers a similar definition: a “generation” is “an identifiable group (cohorts) that shares birth years, age, location, and significant life events during critical developmental stages” (p. 66). Although there is no universal agreement on when a generation exactly begins or ends, they often encompass fifteen to twenty years (Weingarten, 2009).

Generational analysis is not considered an exact science (Sessa et al., 2007). Consequently, some researchers suggest that generational boundaries are not strict and can vary significantly (Bejtkovsky, 2016; Bourne, 2009; Rickes, 2016). Individuals who fall just outside the generational boundaries may still exhibit characteristics of a different generation (Goh & Lee, 2018). Nonetheless, there is overlap regarding the impact of shared historical events, social and economic conditions that are significant for generations (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Costanza et al., 2012; Wey Smola & Sutton, 2002). Individuals share certain major life events that occurred during their formative years, leading to shared beliefs, attitudes, and expectations (Duh & Struwig, 2015; Hendricks & Cope, 2013).

The composition of the workplace will continually be a heterogeneous mix of multiple generations of employees (DelCampo et al., 2017; Milligan, 2016; Watson, 2010; Woodward, 2015). Increasing generational diversity in the workplace further complicates the implementation of change (Comperatore & Nerone, 2008). Nonetheless having multiple generations in an organization offers advantages such as enhanced knowledge sharing, improved problem-solving, and greater adaptability but requires an open and stimulating work environment (Becker et al., 2022; Cady & Valentine, 1999; Cox et al., 1991; Otieno & Nyambegera, 2019). Generations share similar thinking patterns due to shared experiences (Nnamboozie & Parumasur, 2016), which results in diversity in beliefs, attitudes, and values within each generation (Lub et al. 2012; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009; Parry & Urwin,



2011). This influences how employees interact within organizations, their attitudes toward work, communication styles, and expectations of managers (Altimier, 2006; Glass, 2007; Gursoy et al., 2008; Hu et al., 2004; Stanley, 2010). Dealing with these different generational groups requires leaders and managers who can adapt to the unique characteristics of each generation and promote their change readiness to effectively meet the needs of the organization (Stanley, 2010).

### 2.1.1 Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964 (Gursoy et al., 2013; Jeffries & Hunte, 2004; Jones, 2017; Schullery, 2013; Wiedmer, 2015). This generation is consistently referred to as "Baby Boomers" or "Boomers" and sometimes associated as "workaholics" (Ballone, 2007; Jones, 2017). Baby Boomers were influenced by major historical events such as the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement and the women's movement for equal pay (Dwyer, 2009; Williams et al., 2010). As outlined in the literature, Table 1 summarizes the main characteristics of Baby Boomers.

*Table 1 Characteristics of Baby Boomers*

Characteristic	Description	Source
Work ethic	Very hardworking, loyal to their employer	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014; Gursoy et al., 2013; Houlihan, 2008)
Core values	Personal growth, competitive, workaholics	(Ballone, 2007; Gursoy et al., 2013; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003)
Communication	Preference for face-to-face communication	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014)
Work style	Structured, preference for traditional work methods	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014)
Motivational factors	Motivated by position, benefits, and prestige	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014)
Technological skills	Less technologically adept	(Rice, 2015)
Work perception	View work and position as an important part of their self-worth	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014)

As employees, Baby Boomers tend to be very loyal to their employers and colleagues (Houlihan, 2008). Additionally, this generation works particularly hard and is motivated by position, benefits and prestige (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014). Baby Boomers equate their position and work with their self-worth (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014). Moreover, as employees, they tend to seek to make a difference through challenging projects (Hammill, 2005). While they aspire to promotions, they often face restrictions due to their lack of technology skills (Rice, 2015). Baby Boomers tend to work for personal recognition rather than for the betterment of the organization (Gursoy et al., 2013). Nonetheless, this generation is still regarded as valuable employees because organizations can benefit from their knowledge, experience and skills (Salb, 2015).

### 2.1.2 Generation X

Generation X was born between 1965 and 1980 (Jeffries & Hunte, 2004; Stanley, 2010) or between 1965 and 1981 (Jones, 2017). This generation is known by many names, including the “who cares” generation (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014), the “work to live generation” (Stanley, 2010), Xers (Eastman & Liu, 2012; Schullery, 2013), Gen X, or Nexus (Andert, 2011). Generation X experienced the increasing involvement of women in the workforce, cultural diversification, economic struggles, the energy crisis, the rise of personal computers, and the fall of the Berlin Wall (Deal, 2007; Williams et al., 2010; Zemke et al., 2000). As outlined in the literature, Table 2 summarizes the main characteristics of Generation X.

*Table 2 Characteristics of Generation X*

Characteristic	Description	Source
Work ethic	Independent, informal, pragmatic	(Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Coulter & Faulkner, 2014; Lyons & Kuron, 2012)
Core values	Balance, technological literacy, fun, independence	(Gursory et al., 2008; Kyles, 2005; Weingarten, 2009)
Communication	Informal, quick communication	(Ballone, 2007)
Work style	Preference for an informal and pragmatic approaches	(Bourne, 2009)
Motivational factors	Results-oriented, seek work-life balance	(Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Glass, 2007; Bourne, 2009)
Technological skills	Technologically adept	(Kyles, 2005)
Work perception	View work as a means to maintain a good work-life balance	(Bourne, 2009)

As employees, Generation X highly values work-life balance (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Bourne, 2009) and prefers an informal approach (Foot & Stoffman, 1998; Zemke et al., 2013). Generation X is technologically proficient and tends to focus on the outcome rather than the process itself (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014; Glass, 2007). This generation is less loyal to employers and is willing to switch jobs if conditions are not favorable (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014; Lewis & Wescott, 2017). Additionally, Generation X employees have a strong focus on personal growth and independence (Stanley, 2010). They believe that work should be enjoyable (Irvine, 2010), prioritizing personal achievement over organizational needs, which can sometimes lead to perceptions of disloyalty (Kyles, 2005; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003).

### 2.1.3 Millennials

The age range of the generation of Millennials is not uniformly defined in the literature, 1981 is often used as the starting year, the ending year ranges from 1994 to 1997 (Carrillo 2023; Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Kiranti et al., 2024; Otieno & Nyembegara, 2019; Pires, 2017). Millennials are also called Generation Y, Gen Y or GenYdare (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Stueber & Jacobsen, 2018). Millennials grew up in a global society characterized by increasing instability (Stueber & Jacobsen, 2018). Millennials derive their name from the emerging millennium because of their upbringing in the digital age (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). Millennials were significantly impacted by events such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the rise of the internet, and the prevalence of school shootings (Ballone, 2007). As outlined in the literature, Table 3 summarizes the main characteristics of Millennials.

*Table 3 Characteristics of Millennials*

Characteristic	Description	Source
Work ethic	Self-leadership, desire for meaningful work	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014)
Core values	Diversity, global thinking, multitasking, creativity	(Jones, 2017)
Communication	Digital, fast, and informal	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014)
Work style	Innovative, preference for flexible working	(Lewis & Wescott, 2017; Murray, 2015)
Motivational factors	Autonomy, opportunities, and flexibility	(Ballone, 2007; Kaifi et al., 2012)
Technological skills	Highly technologically adept	(Coulter & Faulkner, 2014; Towns, 2013)
Work perception	View work as a means to achieve goals and contribute to something greater than themselves	(Lewis & Wescott, 2017)

As employees, Millennials place high value on autonomy and opportunities (Jones, 2017). According to Lewis and Wescott (2017) and Murray (2015) this is also the first generation of workers to engage innovatively and creatively in the workplace. Millennials seek meaningful work and prefer to work for organizations that share their values and goals (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Murray, 2015). Additionally, this generation expects flexible work schedules from their employers (Lewis & Wescott, 2017). Millennial employees favor transparent and collaborative work cultures (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Haynes, 2011). They are highly proficient with technology, leveraging it to their advantage (Jones, 2017). Millennials demonstrate strong loyalty to organizations that align with their goals (Ferri-Reed, 2014).

#### 2.1.4 Gen Z

The age ranges of Gen Z are identified inconsistently in the literature, with a starting year of 1995 and an ending year ranging from 2009 to 2012 (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Mccrindle & Wolfinger, 2009). The majority of the literature establishes the age range of Gen Z to be individuals born between 1995 and 2010, which can be seen as the logical consequence of the generation of Millennials (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Goh & Lee, 2018; Kiranti et al., 2024; Kouloupoulos & Keldsen, 2016; Schawbel, 2014; Seemiller & Grace, 2015).

Generation Z is most commonly referred to as Gen Z (Jensen, 2021; Magfiroh & Jaro'ah, 2023). But in addition, they are also referred to as Generation C (connected, communicating, content-centric, computerized, community-oriented and clicking (Friedrich et al., 2010). Gen Z is also called Generation I or Gen Tech because this generation was born and raised with the digital world (Singh & Dangmei, 2016). Finally, Gen Z is also called the Internet Generation or the generation of the 21st century (Vesela & Severova, 2021).

Gen Z has been exposed to the uncertain economic times of the Global Financial Crisis, increased occurrences of terrorism, climate changes and rapid acceleration of communication through social media (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009). As outlined in the literature, Table 4 summarizes the main characteristics of Gen Z.

*Table 4 Characteristics of Gen Z*

Characteristic	Description	Source
Work ethic	Integration of technology, learning, development, and entrepreneurial spirit	(Bascha, 2011; Bridges, 2015; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009; Mihelich, 2013; Schawbel, 2014)
Core values	Globally focused, care for the environment	(Kiranti et al., 2024; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009)
Communication	Open, direct, and informal	(Kiranti et al., 2024; Schawbel, 2014)
Work style	Preference for continuous learning and development	(Bascha, 2011; Bridges, 2015; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009)
Motivational factors	Career opportunities, social responsibility, and impact	(Chillakuri, 2020; Middlemiss, 2015)
Technological skills	Highly technologically adept, grew up with technology	(Andrea et al., 2016; Koppersmidt, 1998)
Work perception	Highly value good work-life balance	(Andrea et al., 2016; Chillakuri, 2020)

As employees, Gen Z values an interactive, friendly, and flexible work environment that prioritizes learning and development (Bascha, 2011; Bridges, 2015; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009). Gen Z workers expect technological access at work (Mihelich, 2013) and the necessary support for it (Bridges, 2015). Gen Z expects organizations to provide information, listen to their input, and recognize their contributions (Bascha, 2011). Gen Z desires career opportunities (Chillakuri, 2020), a good work-life balance (Andrea et al., 2016; Chillakuri, 2020), and direct feedback from managers (Dolot, 2018). Honest and open

communication from managers (Schawbel, 2014), as well as integrity and transparency (Half, 2015), are highly valued by Gen Z employees.

Understanding generational characteristics provides valuable insights into how employees perceive and respond to organizational change, which will be the focus of the next section.

## **2.2 Organizational change and the role of change management**

Organizational change refers to the transformation of an organization between two points in time, encompassing both the content of what changes within the organization and the process by which these changes occur (Barnett & Carroll, 1995). Rapid technological development is pushing organizations to embrace organizational change, such as structural change, strategic change, technological change, cultural change or operational change (Gutierrez, 2019; Lehner, 2015; Smith, 2002). In addition to technological developments, globalization, innovation and new opportunities also play a crucial role in stimulating organizational change (Madsen et al., 2005). Successful organizational change is critical for organizations to ensure their operational functionality, competitive advantage and survival aspects (Holt & Vardaman, 2013; Jacobs et al., 2013; Rashid et al., 2004). Change is not an occasional phenomenon (Dawson & Andriopoulos, 2017), but rather a dynamic and ongoing process (Oxford, 2024).

Organizations often experience organizational change as a challenge, with employees seen as important and complex elements to its success (Rashid et al., 2004). Research by Seijts and Roberts (2011) shows that change initiatives cannot succeed without the commitment and enthusiasm of employees. However, individuals' first reaction to change is often resistance (Kachian et al., 2018; Senge, 2006; Rashid et al., 2004). The presence of resistance among individuals tends to increase the cost and timing of change (Osumbah et al., 2015). While engaging individuals during the change process can reduce resistance and accelerate the change process (Koohi, 2008), change management also plays an important role in this (Gagne et al., 2000). The content of the change is often determined by managers, who act as initiators and drivers of organizational change, sometimes leading to unpredictable and unintended outcomes (Brunsson, 1994; Merton, 1938). Additionally, the process of change can be understood through the role of change management (Burnes, 2004; Kotter, 1996).

Effective change management facilitates the acceptance of change by individuals, which contributes to organizational success and performance (Varkey, 2010). Moreover, change management is crucial for organizations that must constantly adapt to market trends, technological advances and competitive pressures (By, 2005; Mizrak, 2023). Change management and the use of models are methods accepted by professionals to manage change,

using a systematic approach to transition or transform organizational goals, processes or technologies (Kachian et al., 2018). Well-known models covered in the literature and frequently used in organizations are the ADKAR model – Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement - (Hiatt, 2006), Kotter's 8 Step Change Model (Kotter, 2007) and Lewin's Three-Stage Model of Change (Lewin, 1947). See appendix 1 for a brief explanation of each model.

Change management focuses on influencing, controlling and facilitating adaptation to change (Kachian et al., 2018). Proper use of change management results in increased change readiness among employees (Kotnour et al., 2015) and contributes to change implementation (Sadler, 2001). Studies have shown that organizations that invest in developing change readiness among their employees are better able to reduce resistance and accelerate change implementation (Lines, 2005; Oreg et al., 2011). Thus, organizational change is explained by the change of *individuals* within the organization (Abdel-Ghany, 2014; Ludviga & Senņikova, 2016) and is influenced by change readiness at the individual level (Benzer, et al., 2017).

### **2.3 Definitions of change readiness**

To ensure the success of organizational change, change readiness among employees is crucial (Afjei & Rezaee, 2013; Armenakis et al., 1993; Bernerth, 2004; Miller et al., 1994). Change readiness is continuously influenced by the employees within the organization (Armenakis et al., 2009; Rusly et al., 2012). It is considered an ongoing interaction, which contributes to employees' change readiness to support and embrace change (Ludviga & Senņikova, 2016).

Employees' change readiness is partly influenced by trust in management and the organization (Vakola, 2014). The organization and manager must clearly demonstrate change readiness; otherwise, employees may actively or passively resist (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1989; Seijts & Roberts, 2011). The role of managers is a crucial factor in employees' change readiness (Shah & Shah, 2010). When managers use their skills and knowledge effectively, it promotes trust, which leads to greater employee commitment to the change initiative (Vakola, 2014).

The most common definitions in the literature are visually represented in Table 5 below.

*Table 5 Definitions of change readiness*

Definition	Source
Change readiness is an antecedent of support for the change initiative, which occurs when employees understand, believe, and intend to change because of a perceived need.	(Seijts & Roberts, 2011)
Change readiness is characterized by one's viewpoint, attitude, and intentions that lead to support for change.	(Armenakis et al., 1993)
Change readiness is related to their beliefs, attitudes and intentions regarding the necessary scope of change and their perceptions of organizational capacity to successfully implement these change	(Backer, 1995)
Change readiness not only as understanding and belief in change, but rather as a composite of cognitive considerations and intentions directed toward a specific effort to change.	(Bernerth, 2004)
Change readiness refers to the degree to which employees hold positive beliefs about the necessity of organizational change and their expectations that these changes will yield beneficial outcomes for both themselves and the organization as a whole.	(Jones et al., 2005)
Change readiness involves how much an individual or group is mentally and emotionally prepared to accept, embrace, and implement a specific plan to intentionally alter the current situation.	(Holt et al., 2007))
Change readiness focuses on perceptions of the need for change, confidence in one's own ability to successfully implement the change (self-efficacy), and the capacity to participate in the change process.	(Cunningham et al., 2002)
Change readiness is the positive attitude of employees towards organizational change, encompassing emotional, cognitive, and intentional dimensions that reflect their attitudes and intentions when new changes are proposed.	(Bouckennooghe et al., 2009)

The literature on change readiness highlights several common themes among researchers. A significant point is that change readiness is often viewed as a combination of perceptions regarding the need for change, belief in the ability to successfully implement that change (self-efficacy), and the intention and willingness to engage in the change process (Armenakis et al., 1993; Bernerth, 2004; Cunningham et al., 2002; Holt et al., 2007). In this context, Seijts and Roberts (2011) and Jones et al. (2005) emphasize that change readiness is essential for supporting change initiatives, with intention, understanding, and belief being crucial factors.

Later definitions of change readiness build upon the original work of Armenakis et al. (1993) and refine it further. While Armenakis et al. (1993) focus primarily on beliefs, they omit the emotional aspect (Rafferty et al., 2013). Holt et al. (2007) expand this definition by integrating both cognitive and emotional dimensions. Bouckennooghe et al. (2009) further add that change readiness can be measured through intentional, cognitive, and emotional dimensions. Rafferty et al. (2013) also emphasize that change readiness consists of both an affective (emotional) and a cognitive component. The emotional component specifically addresses the positive and negative feelings individuals may experience regarding change events (Rafferty et al., 2013; Liu & Perrewé, 2005).

Thus, it is evident that belief, intention, understanding, and perceived need are essential factors in promoting change readiness among an organization's employees, ultimately contributing to successful change.

### **2.3.1 Change readiness and the role of openness to change**

Openness to change plays a crucial role in change readiness. It is considered an important factor that enhances employees' change readiness (Axtell et al., 2002; Devos et al., 2007; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Openness to change can vary due to individual differences (Devos et al., 2007). In the literature, it is defined as the willingness to support change and the positive affect regarding the potential consequences of change (Miller et al., 1994; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). A high degree of openness to change is essential for developing change readiness (Armenakis et al., 1993). In various studies, openness to change is viewed as a component of change readiness because it helps employees adopt a positive and prepared stance toward change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000).

In the research by Rafferty et al. (2013), openness to change is more aligned with the emotional aspect, which encompasses employees' positive or negative feelings about change (Rafferty et al., 2013). In contrast, in the studies by Wanberg and Banas (2000) and Bullock (2013), openness to change is classified under the cognitive aspect, which revolves around the perception and assessment of change, involving rational consideration of the pros and cons (Wanberg & Banas, 2000).

Furthermore, researchers associate change readiness not only with cognitive and emotional aspects but also with specific or general change events. Holt et al. (2007, Rafferty et al. (2013), and Rafferty and Jimmieson (2017) link change readiness to specific changes. In contrast, Bouckennooghe et al. (2009) associate change readiness with both specific and general changes.

### **2.3.2 Change Readiness Theory**

The framework for understanding change readiness, as outlined by Holt et al. (2007), provides a comprehensive approach to understanding how individuals within an organization become ready for change. This theory identifies four main dimensions that contribute to readiness for change at the individual level: (1) appropriateness, (2) management support, (3) change efficacy, and (4) personal valence (Armenakis et al., 1993; Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Holt et al., 2007). These four dimensions focus on the extent to which employees of the organization are cognitively and emotionally inclined to accept, embrace, and implement change (Holt & Vardaman, 2013).

Appropriateness refers to the belief that a specific change is suitable for the situation (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Holt & Vardaman, 2013). Holt et al. (2007) emphasize that individuals must see the change as appropriate and necessary to minimize resistance and



maximize acceptance. Armenakis et al. (1993) support this by stating that beliefs about the appropriateness of change are crucial for creating readiness.

Management support refers to the belief that formal and informal leaders of the organization are committed to successfully implementing the change without it becoming just another fad (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Holt & Vardaman, 2013). Holt et al. (2007) stress that visible support from management is crucial for fostering change readiness. Rafferty and Griffin (2006) highlight that trust in leadership and the perception of management support are essential for a positive perception of change.

Change efficacy refers to the belief that the recipient of the change, both the individual and the organization, can successfully implement the change (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Holt & Vardaman, 2013). Holt et al. (2007) emphasize that individuals must believe they possess the necessary capabilities to realize the change. Bandura (1982) introduced the concept of self-efficacy, indicating that belief in one's abilities plays a crucial role in behavior change and acceptance of new situations.

Personal valence is the belief that the change is beneficial and that the individual can benefit from it (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Holt & Vardaman, 2013). Holt et al. (2007) state that individuals are more willing to accept changes if they expect these changes to provide personal benefits. Vroom (1964) emphasizes in his Expectancy Theory that the motivation to undertake a particular action depends on the expected outcomes and the value placed on these outcomes.

Empirical research on appropriateness, management support, change efficacy, and personal valence in various change contexts has also validated the value of these dimensions (Armenakis et al., 2007; Bernerth, 2004; Cole et al., 2006; Holt et al., 2007). Studies show that perceiving a change as appropriate increases proactive implementation behaviors (Cunningham et al., 2002), while strong management support reduces uncertainty and resistance (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Holt et al. (2007) found that high change efficacy leads to smoother transitions, as employees feel more capable of adapting. Additionally, personal valence is linked to sustained commitment, as individuals expecting personal benefits show lower resistance (Wanberg & Banas, 2000). These dimensions also interact; for instance, even when a change seems appropriate, low management support can still hinder success (Armenakis et al., 1993).

## **2.4 Generational change readiness in organizations**

Baby Boomers are generally more resistant to change, which results in lower change readiness (Glass, 2007). This is supported by research from Ludviga and Sennikova (2016), who found Baby Boomers to exhibit the strongest resistance to change compared to other generations. Similarly, Bourne (2009) also found that Baby Boomers are more resistant to change than their younger counterparts.

Generation X demonstrates a greater willingness to accept change, showing the strongest support among the generations studied—Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016). Glass (2007) corroborates this by highlighting Generation X's openness to change, while Bourne (2009) similarly notes their adaptability. Arefieva & Arefieva (2023) further emphasize that Generation X is particularly ready to embrace change.

Millennials are characterized by their strong support and commitment to change, as seen in Ludviga and Sennikova's (2016) findings, which highlight Millennials' ease in adapting to change. Bourne's (2009) study similarly describes Millennials as considering change a normal aspect of their work environment. Martin (2005) adds that Millennials thrive in environments where organizational change is frequent and continuous. Zemke et al. (2013) observed that Millennials' distinct values and aspirations further shape their positive response to change.

For Gen Z, Dolot (2018) found that only a minority has a positive attitude toward change. Harris (2020) found that Gen Z adapts to changes more quickly and easily than previous generations. This generation actively embraces change (Harris, 2020), which can result in a higher change readiness. Comparative studies on Gen Z's response to organizational change are still limited. More research is needed to thoroughly understand Gen Z's change readiness.

Recent research presents contrasting findings on generational differences in change readiness. For instance, Adatsi (2020) found no significant relationship between generational cohorts (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z) and change readiness. However, a significant difference was found between generational cohorts in terms of the emotional dimension of change readiness (Adatsi, 2020).

While valuable insights into generational differences in change readiness have been established, it is important to note that not all studies explicitly focus on this concept. Furthermore, empirical research on change readiness among generations is scarce (Adatsi, 2020; Bourne, 2009; Dolot, 2018; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016). Additionally, no

comprehensive studies have been conducted examining all four generations currently in the workforce.

#### **2.4.1 Antecedents of change readiness and their impact on different generations**

Different generations exhibited varying responses to organizational changes (Adatsi, 2020; Bourne, 2009; Dolot, 2018; Glass, 2007; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016).

Effective leadership, characterized by transparent communication and support, is frequently cited as a critical factor in enhancing change readiness (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Vakola, 2014), applicable across all generations.

Effective communication contributes to successful change implementation, thereby reducing resistance (Kotter, 1996; Lewis, 2007), and is integral to fostering change readiness (Armenakis et al., 1993). Millennials and Gen Z, who have grown up with rapid, digital communication, naturally favor interactive and direct communication channels, aiding organizations in enhancing change readiness and reducing resistance (Coultner & Faulkner, 2014; Kiranti et al., 2024; Schawbel, 2014)

Change history plays a crucial role in change readiness, as employees' prior experiences with changes influence their attitudes and willingness to accept new changes (Pettigrew et al., 2001; Schneider et al., 1996). Positive past experiences lead to higher readiness for change, while negative past experiences can hinder readiness for change (Berneth, 2004; Devos et al., 2007; Rafferty & Restubog, 2010; Soumyaja et al., 2015). Change history is relevant when studying generations, as generations are shaped by unique social and historical events (Mannheim, 1952) that can influence their perceptions of and reactions to changes. Research shows that generations differ in their response to organizational changes based on the historical context in which they grew up (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Twenge & Campbell, 2008).

## 2.5 Theoretical model and hypotheses

While the literature emphasizes that members of different generations may respond differently to organizational change due to varying experiences and social contexts, the full scope of these generational differences remains unclear. However, the extent to which these differences affect employees' change readiness is still poorly understood. Empirical research on change readiness is limited, and no studies have yet examined all four generations simultaneously. Therefore, this research contributes to this gap by providing empirical evidence encompassing all four generations. A schematic representation of the theoretical model is presented in Figure 1.

*Note: H1b is represented in two ways, as this study explores whether the control variables have a significant influence on change readiness and subsequently whether they function as moderators or mediators.*

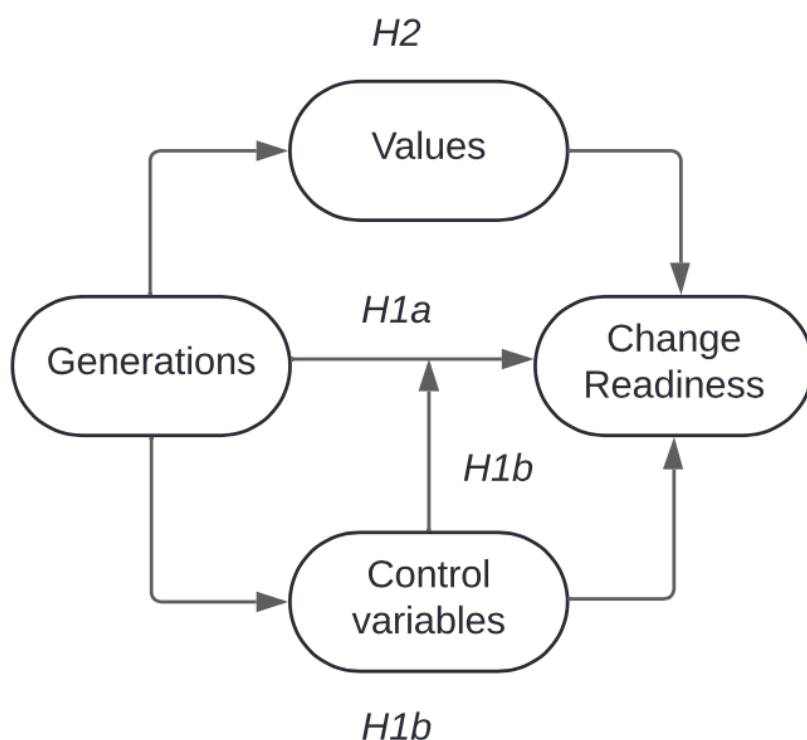


Figure 2 Theoretical model

The hypotheses are grounded in literature showing that Baby Boomers generally resist change more, which results in lower change readiness (Glass, 2007; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016), while Generation X is more open to change and shows strong support for it, which results in a relatively high level of change readiness (Arefieva & Arefieva, 2023; Bourne, 2009; Glass, 2007; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016). Millennials are highly supportive of change and adapt easily, thriving in dynamic environments, which results in high level of change readiness (Bourne, 2009; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016; Martin, 2005; Zemke et al., 2013). For Gen Z,

although data are limited, it can be stated that Gen Z adapts more quickly and easily to change than previous generations, which results in the highest level of change readiness. (Harris, 2020).

The following hypothesis have been formulated:

**Hypothesis 1a (H1a):** Change readiness levels vary among generations, with Baby Boomers exhibiting the lowest level, followed by Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z showing the highest level of change readiness.

Although previous studies indicate that the control variables - change history, openness to change, and openness to experience - are significant predictors of change readiness, their influence in the context of generations has not yet been examined.

Change history, which reflects an individual's prior experiences with organizational change, can significantly influence responses to future changes, with positive past experiences typically promoting higher change readiness (Berneth, 2004; Devos et al., 2007). Openness to change, defined as an individual's willingness to support and engage with change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), has been established as a key factor in fostering change readiness (Armenakis et al., 1993; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Openness to experience, a personality trait within the Big Five framework (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2016; Donnellan et al., 2006), has also been shown to exhibit a significant relationship with change readiness (Tappin, 2014; Oreg, 2003). In light of these findings, these variables are included as control variables in the present study to examine their potential effects on the relationship between generational differences and change readiness.

The following hypothesis have been formulated:

**Hypothesis 1b (H1b):** The relationship between generational differences and change readiness is influenced by control variables - change history, openness to change, and openness to experience - with an exploratory focus on how these factors may contribute to generational differences in change readiness.

Generations exhibit distinct characteristics because they have been shaped by shared historical events, social conditions, and economic contexts during their formative years, which influence their beliefs, attitudes, and expectations (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Costanza et al., 2012; Duh & Struwig, 2015; Hendricks & Cope, 2012). At the same time, these shared experiences have led to differences in values and attitudes across generations (Lub et al., 2012; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009; Parry & Urwin, 2011). These generational differences, particularly in work-related values, can influence change readiness. For example, Baby Boomers, who strongly value stability and predictability in their work, may be less flexible and exhibit lower levels of change readiness compared to younger generations such as Millennials and Gen Z, who are more open to change and innovation (Coultner & Faulkner, 2014; Houlihan, 2008).

The following hypothesis have been formulated:

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Generational values mediate the relationship between generations and change readiness, with each generation's specific values determining their level of change readiness.

### **3 Methodology**

This chapter describes the research methodology. First, the research strategy is outlined. This is followed by an explanation of the data collection process, including the sampling procedure, a description of the sample, the questionnaire overview and the measures. Finally, the data analysis is described, detailing how the survey data is analyzed.

#### **3.1 Research strategy**

This study utilizes a survey (a quantitative research method), which focuses on obtaining accurate and reliable data that allows for statistical analysis (Queirós et al., 2017; Rahman, 2020). Applying quantitative methods is appropriate for this research because it allows for the examination of large and diverse samples, ensuring that insights about generational differences in change readiness can be generalized to the entire population (Carr, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Queirós et al., 2017).

#### **3.2 Data collection**

##### **3.2.1 Sampling procedure**

Research by Aguinis and Gottfredson (2010) and Shieh (2009; 2010) indicates that a small sample size leads to bias and low statistical power to detect effect sizes. Therefore, a minimum sample size of 120 is recommended for the overall study group, as this allows for statistical tests to be conducted and effects to be detected (Aguinis & Stone-Romero, 1997). For this study, a target minimum of 240 respondents was planned, with 60 respondents per generation, to facilitate multiple regression analysis.

The sample consisted of Baby Boomers born between 1946 and 1964, Generation X born between 1965 and 1980, Millennials born between 1981 and 1994, and Generation Z born between 1995 and 2010 (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Goh & Lee, 2018; Gursoy et al., 2013; Jeffries & Hunte, 2004; Jones, 2017; Kiranti, 2024; Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2016; Schawbel, 2014; Schullery, 2013; Seemiller & Grace, 2015; Stanley, 2010; Wiedmer, 2015).

For the sampling method, random convenience sampling was chosen, as it ensures generalizability (Carr, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This method approaches a group based on accessibility, geographical proximity, or availability (Dornyei, 2007; Etikan et al., 2016; Saumure & Given, 2008). Additionally, snowball sampling was utilized, where the researcher asks participants to distribute the survey to other relevant respondents (Emerson, 2015). Both methods contribute to achieving the desired number of respondents (Emerson, 2015).

Given the technological upbringing of these four generations (Andrea et al., 2016; Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2020; Kyles, 2005; Rice, 2015), it has been specifically decided to distribute the survey via online social media channels such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Since Baby Boomers and Generation X generally have less technological proficiency, the survey will also be distributed via email (Rice, 2015). Additionally, respondents were encouraged to share the survey within their social networks, thereby generating an expanding chain of respondents (Emerson, 2015; Parker, 2019).

### **3.2.2 Description of the sample**

A population consists of individuals who share specific characteristics (Vogt, 2007). In this study, the population refers to working individuals born between 1946 and 2010, living in the Netherlands, from which a sample was drawn to collect data (Etikan et al., 2016). The decision to include only Dutch individuals in the sample is justified, as context plays a crucial role in research on generations (Mannheim, 1952).

The data for this study were collected through an online survey. Respondents were reached via social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and email. A total of 460 surveys were received. Of these, 198 surveys were excluded due to incompleteness, resulting in a final sample of 262 respondents. An overview of the demographic characteristics of these respondents is presented in Table 6.

Although the target of a minimum of 240 respondents was achieved, the goal of 60 respondents per generation was not fully realized. Specifically, the number of respondents from the Baby Boomer generation was lower than anticipated. However, the low response rate from Baby Boomers may reflect the current situation in the labor market, as approximately 28% of Baby Boomers are still employed in the Netherlands (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2024). In comparison, in the United States, 15% of Baby Boomers were still active in the labor market in 2024 (Trendlines, 2024).



Table 6 Demographic information of respondents

Demographics	Frequency	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	97	37.0
Female	163	62.2
Other	2	0.8
<i>Education</i>		
Secondary Education - VMBO	3	1.1
Secondary Education - HAVO	9	3.4
Secondary Education - VWO	8	3.1
Secondary Vocational Education - MBO	34	13.0
Higher Vocational Education - HBO	103	39.3
University Education - WO	105	40.1
Other	0	0
<i>Generation</i>		
Baby Boomers	30	11.5
Generation X	90	34.3
Millennials	73	27.9
Gen Z	69	26.3
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3.2.3 Questionnaire overview

The questionnaire was designed to collect data on change readiness among different generations. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gain insights into how generations relate to change readiness. Data was collected anonymously and analyzed to ensure the privacy of the respondents (Tomkins et al., 2017).

The questionnaire consisted of seven parts. See appendix 2 for the survey. The first part included introductory questions, including control variables gender and educational level, to examine whether the relationship between generations and change readiness was influenced by demographic and contextual factors (Becker, 1994; Schneider et al., 2013; Shore et al., 2018). These control variables helped to improve the validity and reliability of the research findings by ensuring that any differences observed were due to generational characteristics and not other demographic factors (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Heppner et al., 1992).

### 3.2.4 Measures

The following sections of the questionnaire focused on the key variables relevant to this study. These measures are discussed in detail below.

#### *3.2.4.1 Generation*

A generation is characterized as a cohort of individuals who share similar age and social context and experience common social events (Mannheim, 1952). To measure the variable generation, individuals were simply asked their birth year, which will correspond to their respective generation (Campbell et al., 2017; Costanza et al., 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Twenge et al., 2010). Additionally, individuals were asked to what extent they identify with their respective generation, acknowledging that generational boundaries can be somewhat fluid and disputed.

#### *3.2.4.2 Change readiness*

Change readiness was measured using the Readiness for Organizational Change Scale developed by Holt et al. (2007). This scale consists of four subdimensions and 25 items, measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree), (1) appropriateness (e.g., item: "I think that the organization will benefit from this change), (2) management support (e.g., item: " Our senior leaders have encouraged all of us to embrace this change"), (3) change efficacy (e.g., item: " I do not anticipate any problems adjusting to the work I will have when this change is adopted") and (4) personal valence (e.g., item: "I am worried I will lose some of my status in the organization when this change is implemented") (Holt et al., 2007). Cronbach alpha for this scale was 0.891 - exceeding the 0.75 threshold - indicating fairly high internal consistency and reliability (Taber, 2018).

#### *3.2.4.3 Generational values*

Generational values were measured using the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP) scale from O'Reilly et al. (1991), on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The OCP scale originally consists of 54 items to assess the value profiles of organizations or individuals (O'Reilly et al., 1991). However, in this study, 20 items were used as these values best reflected the characteristics of the generations (e.g., item: "I am flexible in my work") (O'Reilly et al., 1991). See appendix 3 for the rationale based on literature for selecting the 20 items.

Cronbach alpha for this scale was 0.760 - exceeding the 0.75 threshold - indicating high internal consistency and reliability (Taber, 2018).

#### *3.2.4.4 Change history*

For change history, only the scale of Bordia et al. (2011) is available, but it does not match the specific questions relevant to the current research. Therefore, it was justified to measure change history with five self-formulated items on a 5-point Likert scale, using a positive scale to reflect participants' experiences (e.g., item: "Previous organizational changes have been positive"). Change history could have both a positive and a negative impact on change readiness; positive past experiences enhance change readiness, while negative experiences may hinder it (Berneth, 2004; Devos et al., 2007; Rafferty & Restubog, 2010; Soumyaja et al., 2015). This control mechanism excluded the possibility that previous experiences of generations with organizational changes affected current change readiness.

Cronbach alpha for this scale was 0.831 - exceeding the 0.75 threshold - indicating internal consistency and reliability (Taber, 2018).

#### *3.2.4.5 Openness to change*

Openness to change was measured using the Openness To Organizational Change Scale (OTOCS) from Miller et al. (1994), on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. This scale includes 5 items, two of which are reverse-scored (e.g., "I would consider myself to be 'open' to changes to my work role") (Miller et al., 1994). This allowed to assess that openness to change is an individual-level characteristic, while generation did not function in the same way. As a normal distribution suggests, members of a generation vary in their responses to change; some are more open, while others are less so. Including this variable helped highlight these nuances within generations.

Cronbach alpha for this scale was 0.787 - exceeding the 0.75 threshold - indicating high internal consistency and reliability (Taber, 2018).

#### *3.2.3.6 Openness to experience*

Openness to experience was measured using the Mini-International Personality Item Pool (Mini-IPIP) from Donnellan et al. (2006). The scale consists of a total of 20 items, with four statements per personality trait. In this study, only the four items were used to measure openness to experience (e.g., "I have a clear imagination") on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree (Donnellan et al., 2006). Openness to experience is one of the five personality traits in

the NEOAC model, which consists of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2016; Donnellan et al., 2006). Research shows that openness to experience is significantly associated with change readiness (Tappin, 2014; Oreg, 2003). In addition to controlling for openness to experience, this research also examined whether openness to change and openness to experience overlap. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.729, which is slightly below the 0.75 threshold but still indicates acceptable internal consistency and reliability (Taber, 2018).

### **3.3 Data analysis**

The study employs quantitative research with descriptive statistics, multiple regression analysis, moderation analysis, mediation analysis, and ANCOVA, including post-hoc tests to test the hypotheses using JASP software (Adatsi, 2020).

The survey data were first be analyzed using descriptive statistics to examine central tendencies and distributions, as well as to check for any outliers and missing data (Field, 2024). Multiple regression analysis was utilized to explore the statistically significant relationship between generations (independent variable, IV), change readiness (dependent variable, DV) and values (mediator, MV) (Field, 2024). ANCOVA was used to assess whether there are statistically significant differences in change readiness (DV) among the generations (IV): Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z. Additionally, ANCOVA was used to examine the role of generational values in influencing change readiness. Post-hoc tests were applied to identify specific pairwise differences between the generations and to further analyze the relationships between generational values and change readiness. Mediation and moderation analysis was used to determine the role of control variables. The statistical analysis was processed using JASP software. A standard significance level of 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ) was used for the statistical hypothesis tests (Cox, 1982).

## 4 Results

This chapter presents the research results. First, the generational distribution is discussed. Next, Hypothesis 1a is presented, followed by the tests, and finally, it is concluded whether the hypothesis is rejected. This process is then repeated for Hypothesis 1b and Hypothesis 2.

### 4.1 Generational distribution

In the sample, the distribution of respondents across generations was as follows: Baby Boomers (N = 30), Generation X (N = 90), Millennials (N = 73), and Gen Z (N = 69). The uneven distribution of respondents may affect the strength of the statistical analyses, but the results are presented as they are.

The variable ‘generation’ does not follow a normal distribution, as indicated by the QQ-plot and the Shapiro-Wilk test. Therefore, a non-parametric test – the Kruskal-Wallis test – was chosen instead of a parametric test to analyze the data. The results in Table 7 show a significant relationship between generation and identification with generational traits ( $p < .001$ ). This indicates statistically significant differences between the generations in their level of identification with the described characteristics. The effect size ( $\eta^2 = 0.235$ ) suggests that the differences between generations are of small to moderate magnitude (Cohen, 2013).

Table 7 Kruskal-Wallis Test for generation

Variable	p-value	effect size ( $\eta^2$ )	95% CI lower	95% CI upper
Generation	<.001 **	0.235	0.153	0.360

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

Since the Kruskal-Wallis test revealed significant differences between the generations ( $p < .001$ ), the descriptive statistics presented in Table 8 provide further insight into which generations specifically differ in their level of identification with the described generational traits. Descriptive statistics indicate that Baby Boomers (M = 4.23) identify most strongly with their generational traits, followed by Gen Z (M = 4.01). Millennials (M = 3.96) show slightly lower identification, while Generation X (M = 3.08) identifies the least with the characteristics of their generation.

Table 8 Descriptive statistics for identification of generation

Generation	N	Mean	SD
Baby Boomers	30	4.233	1.006
Generation X	90	3.078	1.008
Millennials	73	3.959	0.696
Gen Z	69	4.014	0.717

## 4.2 Change readiness

To test Hypothesis 1a, an ANOVA is performed to identify differences between generations and change readiness, followed by a post-hoc test to pinpoint specific generational differences. Then the hypothesis is tested.

Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Change readiness levels vary among generations, with Baby Boomers exhibiting the lowest level, followed by Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z showing the highest level of change readiness.

### 4.2.1 ANOVA and post-hoc test: generational differences in change readiness

Before conducting the AN(C)OVA, the five assumptions were tested and met, including normality (Shapiro-Wilk:  $p > 0.05$  for all groups) and homogeneity of variances (Levene's test:  $p = 0.131$ ), confirming the validity of the analysis.

First, an ANOVA analysis was conducted to test the effect of generation on change readiness. The ANOVA analysis revealed a significant effect of generation on change readiness ( $F(3, 258) = 7.147, p < .001$ ). The F-value of 7.147 indicates that the variation between the generations is significantly greater than the variation within the generations, supporting the conclusion that the differences in change readiness are not accidental, and generation is indeed an important factor influencing change readiness. To better understand the differences in change readiness across generations, Table 9 presents the descriptive statistics, which provide an overview of the mean scores, variation, and reliability within each generation.

Table 9 Descriptive statistics of change readiness for each generation

Generation	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
Baby Boomers	30	3.541	0.520	0.095	0.147
Generation X	90	3.662	0.521	0.055	0.142
Millennials	73	3.881	0.476	0.056	0.123
Gen Z	69	3.915	0.411	0.049	0.105

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

Since the ANOVA revealed significant results, indicating differences in change readiness between the generations, the next step was to conduct a post-hoc test. This test allows the identification of specific pairs of generations that show significant differences in change readiness (Kucuk et al., 2016). Tukey's HSD test was chosen because Levene's test supported the assumption of equal variances ( $p = 0.131 > 0.05$ ) (Lee & Lee, 2018).

The post-hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD test (see Table 10) showed significant differences in change readiness between certain generations. Baby Boomers scored significantly lower than both Gen Z and Millennials, while Generation X scored significantly lower than both Gen Z and Millennials. No significant differences were found between Baby Boomers and Generation X, or between Gen Z and Millennials.

Table 10 Post-hoc analyses

Comparison	Mean difference	p-value	Significance
Baby Boomers - Generation X	-0.121	0.635	Not significant
Baby Boomers - Millennials	-0.340	0.007 **	Significant
Baby Boomers - Gen Z	-0.374	0.003 **	Significant
Generation X - Millennials	-0.220	0.021 *	Significant
Gen Z - Generation X	0.253	0.006 **	Significant
Gen Z - Millennials	0.033	0.976	Not significant

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

#### 4.2.2 Hypothesis 1a

Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Change readiness levels vary among generations, with Baby Boomers exhibiting the lowest level, followed by Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z showing the highest level of change readiness.

The results of the ANOVA and post-hoc Tukey's HSD test support Hypothesis 1a. A significant effect of generation on change readiness was found ( $F(3, 258) = 5.570, p < .001$ ). The post-hoc test revealed that Baby Boomers scored significantly lower than both Gen Z and Millennials, while Generation X also scored significantly lower than Gen Z and Millennials. No significant differences were found between Baby Boomers and Generation X, or between Gen Z and Millennials. These results suggest that there are generational differences in change readiness, with the order of Baby Boomers < Generation X < Millennials  $\approx$  Gen Z.

To further understand the relationship between generation and change readiness, the next step is to explore whether the observed generational differences are direct or whether they are influenced by control variables such as change history, openness to change, and openness to experience.

### 4.3 Control variables

To test Hypothesis 1b, an ANCOVA is used to evaluate the control variables, with significant ones analyzed further through linear regression. Mediation and moderation analyses are conducted to determine whether the control variable influences or moderates the relationship between generations and change readiness. Finally, an ANCOVA incorporating demographic variables is performed, followed by the hypothesis test.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b): The relationship between generational differences and change readiness is influenced by control variables - change history, openness to change, and openness to experience - with an exploratory focus on how these factors may contribute to generational differences in change readiness.

#### 4.3.1 ANCOVA with control variables: change history, openness to change and openness to experience

After the ANOVA, the next step was to examine the ANCOVA with control variables. The ANCOVA results in Table 11 indicate that openness to change has a highly significant effect on change readiness ( $p < .001$ ), while change history also has a significant but smaller effect ( $p = 0.027$ ). The effects of openness to experience ( $p = 0.272$ ) and generation ( $p = 0.098$ ) were not significant. This suggests that the significant effect of generation observed in the previous ANOVA ( $p < .001$ ) can largely be attributed to the covariates openness to change and change history, which explain much of the variance in change readiness. When these covariates are included, the effect of generation becomes non-significant.

Table 11 ANCOVA with control variables

ANCOVA - Change readiness			
Variable	F	p-value	Significance
Generation	2.119	0.098	Not significant
Change history	4.954	0.027 *	Significant
Openness to change	48.140	<.001 **	Significant
Openness to experience	1.212	0.272	Not significant

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

Given the significant influence of change history and openness to change on change readiness, further investigation into their effect size was conducted using Cohen's formula (2013) to assess the strength and practical significance of these variables' influence. The effect size ( $\eta^2 = 0.406$ ) indicates that the effect of openness to change on change readiness is large, considering Cohen's (2013) threshold, where  $f^2 \approx 0.35$  indicates a large effect. The effect size



( $\eta^2 = 0.095$ ) indicates that the effect of change history on change readiness is small to medium, based on Cohen's (2013) threshold, where  $f^2 \approx 0.02$  indicates a small effect and  $f^2 \approx 0.15$  indicates a medium effect.

#### 4.3.2 Linear regression analysis: change history and openness to change as predictors

After the significant ANCOVA for the two control variables, the next step was to conduct a linear regression analysis. To better understand the factors that contribute to the relationship between generation and change readiness, openness to change and change history were used as predictors of change readiness. The model was found to be significant ( $F(2,259) = 55.255$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Figure 2 presents a visual representation of the regression model with the three variables, including the coefficients (B) and p-values. The detailed results in Table 12 show that openness to change is a strong and significant predictor of change readiness ( $B = 0.418$ ,  $SE = 0.047$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This indicates that individuals who are more open to change exhibit a higher readiness for change. No significant effect was found for change history ( $B = 0.079$ ,  $SE = 0.043$ ,  $p = 0.064$ ), meaning that this variable does not make a clear contribution to change readiness.

Table 12 Linear regression analysis

Variable	B	SE	$\beta$	p-value
Intercept	2.021	0.174	-	<.001 **
Openness to change	0.418	0.047	0.498	<.001 **
Change history	0.079	0.043	0.105	0.064

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

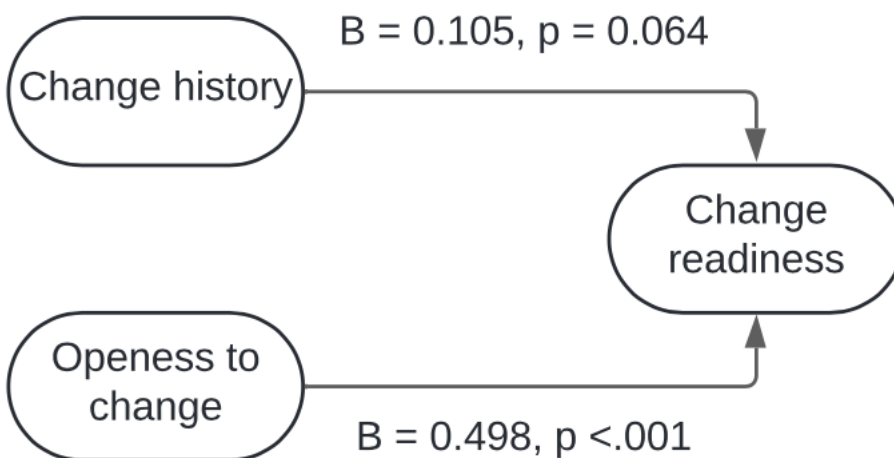


Figure 2 Regression model

Since openness to change is considered a significant predictor of change readiness across generations, the next step was to examine whether this holds true for each generation individually. The results in Table 13 indicate that openness to change is a significant predictor of change readiness for all four generations. For Baby Boomers, the relationship is the strongest ( $B = 0.526$ ,  $p < .001$ ), followed by Generation X ( $B = 0.430$ ,  $p < .001$ ). For Millennials and Gen Z, the results are also significant ( $p < .001$ ), with coefficients of ( $B = 0.347$ ) and ( $B = 0.464$ ), respectively. This underscores that a greater openness to change is associated with higher change readiness to accept change, regardless of the generation.

Table 13 Linear regression for four generations

Variable	B	SE	$\beta$	p-value
Baby Boomers	0.526	0.136	0.589	<.001 **
Generation X	0.430	0.073	0.533	<.001 **
Millennials	0.347	0.097	0.392	<.001 **
Gen Z	0.464	0.096	0.507	<.001 **

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

#### 4.3.3 Moderator and mediator analysis: the role of openness to change

After demonstrating that openness to change is a significant predictor of change readiness across all generations, the next step was to examine whether openness to change acts as a moderator or mediator.

The moderator analysis in table 14 showed that the interaction terms between openness to change and the generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Gen Z) were not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ), meaning that openness to change does not moderate the relationship between generation and change readiness (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The results of the moderation analysis were confirmed through bootstrapping using the Bias-Corrected and Accelerated (BCa) method, which provides robust confidence intervals. The results indicated no significant moderation effects, as the confidence intervals for all mediators contained zero, and the p-values were greater than 0.05 (Efron, 1992; Efron & Tibshirani, 1994)

The results of the mediator analysis in Table 14 reveal that the indirect effect through openness to change is significant ( $p < .001$ ), while the direct effect of generation on change readiness is not significant ( $p = 0.086$ ). This suggests full mediation: the influence of generation on change readiness is largely explained by the level of openness to change. Bootstrapping with the Bias-Corrected and Accelerated (BCa) method (Efron, 1992; Efron &

Tibshirani, 1994) confirmed these findings, with significant confidence intervals for the indirect effect and a non-significant interval for the direct effect.

Table 14 Moderation and mediator analysis

Analysis	Effect	B	p-value	95% CI	Significance
Moderator analysis	Interaction effects:				
	Openness to change x Gen Z	-0.062	0.725	[-0.407, 0.283]	No significant moderating effect
	Openness to change x Generation X	-0.096	0.525	[-0.391, 0.199]	No significant moderating effect
	Openness to change x Millennials	-0.179	0.272	[-0.498, 0.141]	No significant moderating effect
Mediator analysis	Direct effect	0.048	0.086	[-0.007, 0.102]	The direct effect of generation on change readiness is not significant
	Indirect effect via mediator	0.086	<.001 **	[0.052, 0.120]	The indirect effect via openness to change is significant
	Total effect	0.134	<.001 **	[0.075, 0.193]	Generation has a significant total effect on change readiness

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

#### 4.3.4 ANCOVA with demographic variables: gender and education

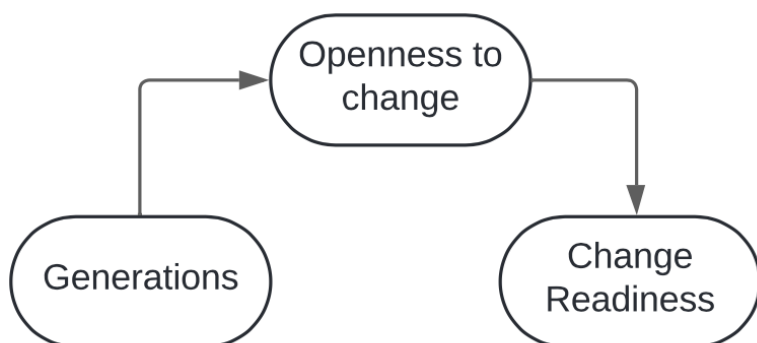
After the ANCOVA with control variables, the next step was to conduct an ANCOVA with demographic variables, namely gender and education. The results showed that both gender ( $p = 0.154$ ) and education ( $p = 0.219$ ) did not have a significant influence on change readiness, ( $p = 0.154 > 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.219 > 0.05$ ). Therefore, gender and education do not have a significant effect on change readiness.

#### 4.3.5 Hypothesis 1b

Hypothesis 1b (H1b): The relationship between generational differences and change readiness is influenced by control variables - change history, openness to change, and openness to experience - with an exploratory focus on how these factors may contribute to generational differences in change readiness.

The ANCOVA results showed that openness to change significantly influenced change readiness ( $p < .001$ ), suggesting that people who are more open to change are also more willing to embrace change. Change history was not found to be a significant predictor ( $p = 0.064$ ), while openness to experience was also not significant ( $p = 0.272$ ). The linear regression further confirmed that openness to change is a strong and significant predictor of change readiness for all generations ( $p < .001$ ).

Although the moderator analysis indicated no significant moderating influence of openness to change between generations ( $p > 0.05$ ), the mediator analysis showed a significant indirect influence of openness to change ( $p < .001$ ). The direct influence of generation on change readiness was not significant ( $p = 0.086$ ), indicating full mediation: the observed generational differences in change readiness are largely explained by differences in openness to change. Therefore, Hypothesis 1b is supported because the influence of generation on change readiness is primarily mediated by differences in openness to change. Below, Figure 3 schematically shows the new theoretical model.



*Figure 3 New theoretical model after hypothesis testing*

#### 4.4 Generational values and change readiness

To test hypothesis 2, an ANOVA is first conducted for the 20 values, followed by Levene's test to determine the required post-hoc test for the eight significant values. Then, the direct relationship between generation and change readiness is examined through linear regression. Next, the significant values for Gen Z and Millennials are tested in a mediation analysis. Finally, the hypothesis is tested.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Generational values mediate the relationship between generations and change readiness, with each generation's specific values determining their level of change readiness.

##### 4.4.1 ANOVA and post-hoc test: differences in generational values

First, an ANOVA was conducted to determine which of the 20 values showed significant differences between generations and to identify which generation had the highest mean for each significant value. The results of the ANOVA, along with the means of the four generations, are presented in Table 15. Significant generational differences were found for 8 values: flexibility ( $p = 0.001$ ), adaptability ( $p = 0.003$ ), being team-oriented ( $p = 0.014$ ), respect for individual rights ( $p = 0.006$ ), informality ( $p < .001$ ), opportunities for professional growth ( $p < 0.001$ ), high pay for good performance ( $p = 0.001$ ), and working long hours ( $p = 0.033$ ). No significant differences were found for the other 12 values ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Table 15 ANOVA results and mean of the four generations

Value	F	df	p-value	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials	Gen Z
Flexibility	5.661	3	0.001 **	3.833	4.044	4.041	4.348
Adaptability	4.924	3	0.003 **	3.733	3.878	4.014	4.232
Stability	0.919	3	0.432	3.700	3.867	3.822	3.957
Predictability	1.345	3	0.260	3.400	3.189	3.000	3.232
Being innovative	1.093	3	0.352	3.833	3.867	3.973	4.087
Being quick to take advantage of opportunities	1.593	3	0.192	3.667	3.711	3.800	3.971
Autonomy	1.599	3	0.190	3.767	3.800	3.740	3.493
Being team oriented	3.583	3	0.014 *	4.067	3.856	4.096	4.145
Sharing information freely	1.052	3	0.370	4.067	4.178	4.301	4.217
Fairness	2.627	3	0.054	4.400	4.633	4.753	4.681
Respect for the individual's right	4.191	3	0.006 **	4.200	4.378	4.438	4.623
Informality	6.356	3	<.001 **	3.733	4.267	4.397	4.333
Achievement orientation	2.470	3	0.062	4.310	4.389	4.507	4.594
Opportunities for professional growth	12.526	3	<.001 **	4.000	4.189	4.425	4.652
High pay for good performance	5.296	3	0.001 **	4.067	4.144	4.260	4.522
Security of employment	0.711	3	0.546	3.967	3.833	3.781	3.971
Offers praise for good performance	0.807	3	0.491	4.138	4.133	4.205	4.304
Working in collaboration with others	0.705	3	0.550	4.133	4.167	4.301	4.188
Working long hours	2.965	3	0.033 *	3.200	3.689	3.630	3.826
Being socially responsible	1.753	3	0.157	3.900	3.956	3.141	3.870

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

After the ANOVA revealed significant generational differences for 8 values, the next step was to perform Levene's test to assess whether these differences met the assumption of equal variances, which guided the selection of appropriate post-hoc tests (see Table 16). For flexibility ( $p = 0.039$ ) and adaptability ( $p = 0.038$ ), the test indicated unequal variances ( $p < 0.05$ ), and as a result, Welch ANOVA and the Games-Howell post-hoc test were applied (Lee & Lee, 2018). For the remaining values - being team-oriented ( $p = 0.263$ ), respect for individual rights ( $p = 0.741$ ), informality ( $p = 0.127$ ), opportunities for professional growth ( $p = 0.360$ ), high pay for good performance ( $p = 0.256$ ), and working long hours ( $p = 0.435$ ) - equal variances were assumed ( $p > 0.05$ ), and the Tukey HSD test was performed.

Table 16 Levene's test for eight values

Value	Levene's test p-value	Equality of variances	Post-hoc test used
Flexibility	0.039 *	Unequal	Games-Howell
Adaptability	0.038 *	Unequal	Games-Howell
Being team oriented	0.263	Equal	Tukey HSD
Respect for the individual's right	0.741	Equal	Tukey HSD
Informality	0.127	Equal	Tukey HSD
Opportunities for professional growth	0.360	Equal	Tukey HSD
High pay for good performance	0.256	Equal	Tukey HSD
Working long hours	0.435	Equal	Tukey HSD

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

After conducting Levene's test to assess the equality of variances, the next step was to perform the post-hoc tests for all eight values to identify the specific generational differences. Table 17 displays the significant differences between generations for the examined values. Gen Z consistently scored the highest on flexibility, adaptability, respect for individual rights, and opportunities for professional growth, while Millennials scored the highest on informality. The specific p-values and significance levels are provided for all values.

Table 17 Post-hoc analyses

Value	Comparison	p-value	Significance	Highest mean
Flexibility	Baby Boomers - Gen Z	0.009 **	Significant	Gen Z (M = 4.35)
	Generation X - Gen Z	0.012 *	Significant	
	Millennials - Gen Z	0.015 *	Significant	
Adaptability	Baby Boomers - Gen Z	0.019 *	Significant	Gen Z (M = 4.23)
	Generation X - Gen Z	0.007 **	Significant	
Being team oriented	Generation X - Gen Z	0.017 *	Significant	Gen Z (M = 4.15)
Respect for the individual's right	Baby Boomers - Gen Z	0.007 **	Significant	Gen Z (M = 4.62)
	Generation X - Gen Z	0.049 *	Significant	
Informality	Baby Boomers - Gen Z	0.001 **	Significant	Millennials (M = 4.40)
	Baby Boomers - Generation X	0.003 **	Significant	
	Baby Boomers - Millennials	<.001 **	Significant	
Opportunities for professional growth	Baby Boomers - Gen Z	<.001 **	Significant	Gen Z (M = 4.65)
	Baby Boomers - Generation X	0.005 **	Significant	
	Generation X - Gen Z	<.001 **	Significant	
High pay for good performance	Baby Boomers - Gen Z	0.011 *	Significant	Gen Z (M = 4.52)
	Generation X - Gen Z	0.003 **	Significant	
Working long hours	Baby Boomers - Gen Z	0.018 *	Significant	Gen Z (M = 3.83)

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

#### 4.4.2 Linear regression analysis: generation and change readiness

After the post-hoc analysis, the next step was to conduct a linear regression to examine the direct effect of generation on change readiness. Table 18 displays that Gen Z ( $p < .001$ ) and Millennials ( $p = 0.001$ ) scored significantly higher than Baby Boomers, while Generation X showed no significant difference ( $p = 0.236$ ). These results align with ANOVA and post-hoc findings.

Table 18 Linear regression

Variable	B	SE	p-value
Intercept	3.776	0.031	<.001 **
Generation (Gen Z)	0.374	0.105	<.001 **
Generation (Generation X)	0.121	0.102	0.236
Generation (Millennials)	0.340	0.104	0.001 **

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

#### 4.4.3 Mediation analysis: the role of generational values

After the linear regression, the next step was to analyze the values as potential mediators. Gen Z scored highest on seven of eight values, and Millennials on one. No further analyses were conducted for Baby Boomers and Generation X due to a lack of significant differences. To investigate whether these values mediate the relationship between generation and change readiness, a mediation analysis was conducted for Gen Z and Millennials.

Table 19 shows the mediation analysis for Gen Z. None of the potential mediators, such as flexibility, adaptability, or working long hours, had a significant effect on change readiness ( $p > 0.05$ ). The bootstrapping analysis, using the Bias-Corrected and Accelerated (BCa) method (Efron, 1992; Efron & Tibshirani, 1994), confirmed these findings: the 95% confidence intervals of all mediators contained zero, and the p-values were greater than 0.05, indicating that no mediator had a significant effect on change readiness.

Table 19 Mediation analysis for Gen Z

Path	B	p-value	95% CI	Significance
Gen Z -> flexibility -> change readiness	0.034	0.111	[-0.008, 0.077]	Not significant
Gen Z -> adaptability -> change readiness	0.022	0.227	[-0.014, 0.058]	Not significant
Gen Z -> being team oriented -> change readiness	0.006	0.477	[-0.011, 0.024]	Not significant
Gen Z -> respect for the individual's right -> change readiness	0.015	0.304	[-0.013, 0.042]	Not significant
Gen Z -> opportunities for professional growth -> change readiness	0.029	0.222	[-0.018, 0.075]	Not significant
Gen Z -> high pay for good performance -> change readiness	-0.007	0.667	[-0.039, 0.025]	Not significant
Gen Z -> working long hours -> change readiness	0.008	0.365	[-0.009, 0.024]	Not significant

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

Table 20 shows the mediation analysis for Millennials. The potential mediator, informality, had no significant effect on change readiness ( $p > 0.05$ ). The bootstrapping analysis confirmed these findings: the 95% confidence intervals of all mediators contained zero, and the p-values were greater than 0.05, indicating that informality had a no significant effect on change readiness (Efron, 1992; Efron & Tibshirani, 1994).

Table 20 Mediation analysis for Millennials

Path	B	p-value	95% CI	Significance
Millennials -> informality -> change readiness	0.010	0.304	[-0.009, 0.028]	Not significant

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$



#### **4.4.4 Hypothesis 2**

H2: Generational values mediate the relationship between generations and change readiness, with each generation's specific values determining their level of change readiness.

The results of the mediation analyses show that generational values do not significantly mediate the relationship between a generation and change readiness. For Gen Z, values such as flexibility ( $p = 0.111$ ), adaptability ( $p = 0.227$ ), and others were not significant, confirmed by bootstrapping (confidence intervals included zero). For Millennials, the value informality was not significant ( $p = 0.304$ ), also supported by bootstrapping 95% confidence interval  $[-0.009, 0.028]$ . Since none of the values were significant, H2 is rejected; the results show that  $p > 0.05$ .

## 5 Discussion

This chapter discusses the main findings of the study. The theoretical and practical implications are then examined, along with the study's limitations and suggestions for future research. The chapter concludes with a summary that answers the research question.

### 5.1 Main findings

This study focused on analyzing the influence of generational differences on employees' change readiness within organizations. Specifically, three hypotheses were examined: (1a) whether generations differ significantly in change readiness (H1a), (1b) whether control variables influence the relationship between generation and change readiness (H1b), and (2) to what extent generational values mediate the relationship between generations and change readiness (H2). The findings contribute to the literature on change management and intergenerational dynamics by providing empirical insights into the interaction between generational differences and change readiness.

Hypothesis 1a is supported, the results of the ANOVA reveal significant differences in change readiness between generations ( $F(3, 258) = 7.147, p < .001$ ). Gen Z ( $M = 3.915$ ) and Millennials ( $M = 3.881$ ) exhibit higher change readiness compared to Generation X ( $M = 3.662$ ) and Baby Boomers ( $M = 3.541$ ). These findings align with previous studies suggesting that younger generations—Millennials and Gen Z—are better equipped to handle organizational change. Millennials perceive change as a normal part of their work environment, which fosters their support and commitment to organizational transformations (Bourne, 2009; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016). Similarly, Gen Z adapts quickly and embraces changes actively (Harris, 2020). In contrast, Baby Boomers demonstrate lower change readiness, consistent with earlier research highlighting their resistance to change (Bourne, 2009; Glass, 2007). Generation X shows moderate levels of change readiness, partly due to their adaptability and openness to change (Bourne, 2009; Glass, 2007).

Hypothesis 1b is supported by the finding that openness to change plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between generation and change readiness. The linear regression showed that openness to change was a significant predictor, and the further mediation analysis showed that the relationship between generation and change readiness is fully mediated by openness to change ( $p < .001$ ). While the ANOVA results indicate generational differences in change readiness, regression analysis shows that these differences can be explained by variations in openness to change rather than by generational membership

itself. The indirect effect of generation on change readiness through openness to change was significant ( $p < .001$ ), whereas the direct effect was not significant ( $p = 0.086$ ). This finding indicates that generational differences in change readiness occur indirectly via openness to change, rather than as a direct consequence of generational membership. This emphasizes that generation alone does not determine change readiness; rather, it is the development of individual traits, such as openness to change, that plays a critical role. Previous studies have emphasized that openness to change is essential for fostering change readiness (Armenakis et al., 1993; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). However, the mediating role of openness has rarely been explored in prior research. The finding that openness acts as a mediator between generation and change readiness underscores the importance of further investigating the role of this trait in organizational change (Miller et al., 1994).

Hypothesis 2, which proposed that generational values such as flexibility, adaptability, and informality mediate the relationship between generations and change readiness, is not supported. Although significant differences were found in eight values—seven for Gen Z and one for Millennials ( $p < 0.05$ )—no significant differences were observed for Baby Boomers and Generation X across the twelve values studied ( $p > 0.05$ ). Mediation analyses conducted for Gen Z and Millennials further indicate that values such as flexibility and informality have no significant influence on change readiness ( $p > 0.05$ ). These findings highlight that change readiness is not driven by generational values. This contrasts with earlier studies that emphasize generational differences in attitudes and beliefs as a result of shared historical, social, and economic contexts (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018; Costanza et al., 2012). For Millennials and Gen Z—generations often characterized by high levels of flexibility and adaptability—no specific value item was found to play a significant role as a mediator (Ballone, 2007; Bridges, 2015; Jones, 2017; Kaifi et al., 2012; Lewis & Wescott, 2017).

## 5.2 Theoretical implications

Change readiness is a multidimensional construct that includes both cognitive and emotional components (Bouckennooghe et al., 2009; Holt et al., 2007; Rafferty et al., 2013). The cognitive dimension reflects an individual's rational evaluation of change, including their perception of its necessity and possible consequences (Wanberg & Banas, 2000). In contrast, the emotional dimension reflects affective reactions to change, such as excitement, fear or resistance (Rafferty et al., 2013; Liu & Perrewé, 2005). Although this study did not explicitly examine these components, the findings reinforce the idea that openness to change inherently

includes both cognitive and emotional aspects. Previous research suggests that openness to change involves a positive affective attitude toward change (Rafferty et al., 2013), as well as a cognitive readiness to evaluate and accept change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000). This highlights that openness to change can serve as an individual trait through which individuals develop change readiness, integrating both emotional and cognitive readiness for organizational transitions.

This study contributes to the existing literature on change readiness and generations within organizations by initially demonstrating significant differences in change readiness across generations. However, further analysis revealed that generational membership alone does not have a direct influence on change readiness, aligning with the findings of Adatsi (2020). This study extends this insight by showing that the relationship between generations and change readiness is fully mediated by openness to change, a factor that has not been explicitly explored in previous research but has been demonstrated as a key component of change readiness (Armenakis et al., 1993; Wanberg & Banas, 2000).

Furthermore, this study makes an important theoretical distinction between openness to change and openness to experience. While these concepts are sometimes considered related, the analysis reveals only a weak, non-significant correlation between the two variables ( $r = 0.354$ ,  $p < .001$ ), suggesting they function independently (Cohen, 2013). Openness to experience, a personality trait within the Big Five, does not have a significant impact on change readiness in this study (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2016; Donnellan et al., 2006). In contrast, openness to change, which operates at both individual and contextual levels (Sinval et al., 2021; Wanberg & Banas, 2000), emerges as a significant predictor of change readiness.

Moreover, this study suggests that the broader environmental context plays a role in the development of openness to change. Environment plays an important role in influencing values and behaviors, which are often shaped by the context in which one grows up (Yu & Miller, 2005), and consequently attitudes toward organizational change. Baby Boomers and Generation X experienced several significant events (Deal, 2007; Dwyer, 2009; Williams et al., 2010; Zemke et al., 2000), but changes within the workplace and technological advances were relatively limited in their early years (Kyles, 2005; Rice, 2015). This indicates that these generations grew up in a relatively stable and predictable environment, and are generally less open to change. In contrast, Millennials and Gen Z have also experienced significant events, but these have primarily occurred within the field of work and technology, such as the rise of computers, the Internet and social media (Ballone, 2007; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009).

Moreover, within the field of work, there is more emphasis among these younger generations on contributing to society (Jones, 2017; Kiranti et al., 2024; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009). This indicates that these generations have grown up in a much more dynamic and rapidly changing environment, and exhibit a higher degree of openness to change, and thus greater change readiness.

Additionally, the findings suggest that openness to change is not only an individual trait but can also emerge as a shared group characteristic within generations, in line with the research of Augustsson et al. (2017), where openness to change was similarly considered a group variable. Previous studies indicate that group interactions lead to shared beliefs and behaviors (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000; Kozlowski & Hattrup, 1992). This aligns with the literature on generational cohorts, which argues that shared historical experiences lead to common values, attitudes, and behaviors within generations (Beaman, 2012; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016). Self-categorization theory supports this perspective by suggesting that individuals who identify with a specific group—such as a generation—internalize the attitudes and behaviors of that group (Hoggy & Terry, 2000). This implies that members of a generation can develop a collective sense of openness to change. This offers a possible explanation for the observed differences in openness to change between generations.

Regarding the influence of change history on change readiness, no significant effect was found, which contrasts with previous studies that expected a positive relationship between a positive change history and change readiness (Berneth, 2004; Devos et al., 2007; Rafferty & Restubog, 2010; Soumyaja et al., 2015). This raises the question of whether, in the current context of rapid technological and organizational changes, past experiences with change are less determinant of change readiness than previously assumed.

Finally, these findings raise further questions about the role of generational values such as flexibility and adaptability, which are often associated with Millennials and Gen Z (Bridges, 2015; Jones, 2017; Lewis & Wescott, 2017). While these values are traditionally considered predictors of change readiness, this study found that they had no significant impact and did not play a mediating role. This suggests that other, possibly more context-dependent factors, such as the speed of technological change, may have a greater impact on the change readiness of generations to embrace change (Alolabi et al., 2021).

### 5.3 Practical implications

In addition to its theoretical contribution, this study also offers valuable practical implications for businesses and managers. Below are some concrete recommendations that organizations can implement. Since employee change readiness directly impacts the effectiveness and pace of organizational transformations, investing in enhancing this readiness is crucial for organizations striving for sustainable and successful change (Abdel-Ghany, 2014; Benzer et al., 2017; Ludviga & Sennikova, 2016).

To achieve this, organizations must develop specific change strategies tailored to the unique needs and preferences of different generations. This not only fosters individual change readiness but also strengthens the overall resilience of the organization during transformation processes. However, the findings suggest that generational values do not play a significant role in change readiness. This implies that organizations might benefit more from focusing on established change management models, rather than assuming that generational differences in values, such as flexibility or adaptability, are the main drivers of change acceptance. Selecting key elements from traditional change frameworks, such as Kotter's model (2007) or Lewin's change model (1947), may be a more effective approach to guiding employees through transitions. For Baby Boomers and Generation X, who tend to exhibit lower levels of change readiness, it is essential to provide additional guidance and communication during organizational changes. For example, organize presentations or meetings for these generations that prioritize transparency and direct communication. Emphasize the importance and urgency of the change, aligning with the first phase of Kotter's model, "create a sense of urgency." (Kotter, 2007). Inform these groups early, be transparent about the reasons behind the change, and highlight why the adjustments are necessary. For Millennials and Gen Z, who display higher levels of change readiness, managers can accelerate the change process by leveraging their innovative and adaptive mindset while spending less time on extensive explanations of the process. Focus on rapid implementation, freeing up time and resources to provide additional support to Baby Boomers and Generation X.

Furthermore, a key implication of this study is that openness to change may be a more significant factor in change readiness than generational membership. This suggests that organizations should prioritize openness to change, which can be considered an individual trait, over age when developing change strategies. By assessing and nurturing openness to change among employees, organizations can help reduce age-related biases in hiring and development. Instead of assuming that younger employees are inherently more adaptable, businesses should implement selection and training processes that focus on individual traits

rather than age group. In summary, it is recommended that organizations adopt customized change strategies. This could involve designing approaches tailored to specific generations or even combinations of generations. Additionally, organizations should shift focus from generational stereotypes to individual traits such as openness to change, ensuring that change management efforts are both equitable and effective across all employee groups.

#### **5.4 Limitations and future research**

First, the limitations of this study are discussed, followed by key areas for future research. Although the sample sizes vary across generations, with a relatively smaller group of Baby Boomers ( $N = 30$ ) compared to the other generations ( $N > 60$ ), this presents a minor limitation. However, given that Baby Boomers also represent a smaller proportion of the broader workforce, the study remains a valid reflection of generational dynamics in change readiness. Moreover, various statistical tests were conducted to check for equality, reinforcing the robustness of the findings.

Another limitation is the use of random convenience sampling, where respondents were selected based on accessibility rather than through a fully randomized process (Golzar et al., 2022). While this method allowed for efficient data collection, it may limit the generalizability of the findings beyond the studied sample (Acharya et al., 2013; Koerber & McMichael, 2008). However, the diversity within the sample still provides a meaningful basis for examining generational differences in change readiness.

Additionally, this study does not explicitly account for the possibility that respondents, though born in the Netherlands, may have grown up in different cultural contexts. Culture is shaped by more than just place of birth; factors such as upbringing, shared experiences, and religious traditions also play a role (Hofstede, 2001). While this study did not include specific questions about cultural influences, future research could explore these variations in more depth.

A further limitation relates to the definition of generational boundaries. While the Baby Boomer generation is relatively well-defined, the boundaries of Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z vary across different sources (see also Bejtkovsky, 2016; Bourne, 2009; Rickes, 2016). These inconsistencies, combined with shared experiences such as technological advancements, suggest that generational cohorts may not always exhibit distinct differences. This study acknowledges this fluidity and interprets the findings with this in mind.

Finally, measuring the multidimensional construct of change readiness presents inherent challenges. This study used the scale developed by Holt et al. (2007), which is specifically aimed at measuring change readiness in relation to specific changes. However, this study focuses on general change readiness across generations. By asking all participants about their change readiness in the context of a specific change, the overall attitude of these generations toward change is ultimately measured. However, this may affect how certain nuances in generations' change readiness are captured. Nevertheless, Holt et al.'s (2007) scale remains a valuable tool for assessing change readiness.

There are several key areas in this research that deserve further attention. First, it would be valuable to repeat this study with a larger and more balanced sample. A larger sample would improve the reliability and validity of the results and make it possible to draw more generalizable conclusions (Faber & Fonseca, 2014). Repeating the study with a larger group could also help verify whether the findings remain consistent or whether variations arise across different samples.

Additionally, it is interesting to explore the influence of cultural factors on the change readiness of different generations. Koppersmidt's (2000) definition of generations emphasizes that the location where one grows up plays a significant role in shaping generational characteristics. Therefore, it would be valuable to conduct this research in a different cultural context or country. This could provide insights into whether the "location" factor affects generations and their change readiness. Exploring cultural differences could reveal new dimensions of change readiness, as the way change is experienced and accepted may vary greatly depending on an individual's cultural background.

Finally, it is certainly worth exploring the role of openness to change further in relation to change readiness. This study shows that the level of openness to change within generations influences their change readiness. This is also supported by existing literature, which suggests that openness to change is an important factor that enhances change readiness (Axtell et al., 2002; Devos et al., 2007; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). However, there is still insufficient research on the specific relationship between these two variables. It is therefore crucial to further investigate what openness to change entails and how it influences individuals' change readiness.



## 5.5 Conclusion

This study aimed to understand how generational characteristics influence employees' change readiness within organizations. The research question was: *How do generational characteristics influence employees' change readiness in an organization?* To answer this, the study examined the relationship between generations and change readiness, as well as the mediating role of generational values. A standardized online survey was used to achieve the research objectives, with 262 respondents completing the survey in full.

The results confirm the hypothesis that significant differences exist in change readiness between generations, with Gen Z and Millennials showing higher readiness than Generation X and Baby Boomers. However, the findings also reveal that this relationship is primarily explained by openness to change rather than generational membership itself. This suggests that being part of a particular generation does not directly determine change readiness; rather, individual openness to change plays a crucial role.

The hypothesis that generational values—such as flexibility, adaptability, and informality—mediate this relationship was not supported. While differences in values exist between generations, they did not significantly impact change readiness. This suggests that change readiness is not primarily driven by the specific values characteristic of generations, but by other factors, such as individual traits.

These findings highlight that organizations should focus on fostering openness to change across all employees rather than relying on generational stereotypes. Although this study has provided important insights, the findings should be viewed as a starting point. Future research could further investigate other individual characteristics that influence change readiness, as well as the contexts in which generational characteristics may play a more significant role. Further studies into the role of openness to change and how it can be developed within organizations will contribute to improving change processes in the future.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Table of the change management models

Model	Use	Source
<p>The <b>ADKAR model</b> is a process-oriented framework for individual change. It focuses on five sequential steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Awareness</b> (of the need for change)</li> <li>2. <b>Desire</b> (to participate and support the change)</li> <li>3. <b>Knowledge</b> (of how to change)</li> <li>4. <b>Ability</b> (to implement new skills and behaviors)</li> <li>5. <b>Reinforcement</b> (to sustain the change).</li> </ol>	<p>The <b>ADKAR model</b> is used to guide <b>individuals</b> through personal <b>changes within organizations</b>, emphasizing specific steps necessary for successful adoption of changes.</p>	<p>(Hiatt, 2006)</p>
<p><b>Kotter's model</b> provides a <b>structured approach to organizational change</b> in <b>eight sequential steps</b>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>It begins with creating a sense of urgency</b></li> <li>2. <b>forming a powerful coalition</b></li> <li>3. <b>developing a vision and strategy</b></li> <li>4. <b>communicating the vision</b></li> <li>5. <b>empowering employees</b></li> <li>6. <b>generating short-term wins</b></li> <li>7. <b>consolidating gains and producing more change</b></li> <li>8. <b>and finally anchoring the change in the corporate culture.</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Kotter's model</b> is utilized to <b>help organizations effectively plan and implement major changes</b> by focusing on creating momentum, engaging stakeholders, and embedding changes sustainably.</p>	<p>(Kotter, 2007)</p>
<p><b>Lewin's model</b> describes change as a process involving <b>three stages</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Unfreezing</b> (preparing the organization by creating awareness and reducing resistance to change)</li> <li>2. <b>Changing</b> (implementing the change through new practices or behaviors)</li> <li>3. <b>Refreezing</b> (anchoring the change by reinforcing new norms and behaviors in the organization).</li> </ol>	<p><b>Lewin's model</b> is used to <b>assist organizations in effectively planning and executing changes</b> by addressing the <b>emotional and psychological aspects</b> of change management, ensuring sustainable integration of changes into the organizational culture.</p>	<p>(Lewin, 1947)</p>

## Appendix 2 – Survey

Hi Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials or Gen Z — do you know which generation you belong to? Ever wondered how your generation handles change?

Help us find out! By participating, you will help us discover how organizations can engage different generations in organizational changes.

Your participation is completely anonymous, and all responses will be securely stored in the UT\* database. Plus, it will only take 10 minutes of your time! Many others have already joined – will you be next?

If you have any comments or questions, feel free to reach out to me at:

[m.s.weusthof@student.utwente.nl](mailto:m.s.weusthof@student.utwente.nl)

Thank you so much!

UT\* University of Twente

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### 1 General questions

1. Were you born in the Netherlands? *Yes/No*
2. How do you describe yourself? *Male/ Female/Prefer not to say/I prefer my own description: ...*
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? *Secondary education-VMBO/Secondary education – HAVO/ Secondary education – VWO/Higher Vocational education – HBO/University education – WO/Other...*

### 2 Generations

4. When were you born? *1946-1964 (Baby Boomers)/1965-1980 (Generation X)/1981-1994(Millennials)/1995-2010 (Gen Z)*

Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) are known for their loyalty to employers and strong work ethic, often motivated by position and recognition.

Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) values work-life balance and is characterized by independence and lower loyalty to employers.

Millennials (born between 1981 and 1994) are tech-savvy, value autonomy and meaningful work, and prefer transparent, collaborative work cultures.

Gen Z (born between 1995 and 2010) seeks a flexible, learning-oriented work environment, with a strong focus on technology, open communication, and recognition of contributions.

*Listed above are the characteristics for each generation.*

5. To what extent do you identify with the characteristics described for your generation.

*Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### **3 Change readiness**

6. Are you currently employed? *Yes/No*

Think about your most recent organizational change in your current role—this could be a change you're currently experiencing or one you've recently completed.

Organizational change refers to the transformation of an organization over time (e.g., new software implementation, cultural change, digitization of processes, new strategies, restructuring, leadership style changes, etc.).

When you see the phrase “this change,” link it to your **specific organizational change**.

7. Please describe the organizational change you're thinking about in the text box below.

7A. The organizational change you have in mind is: *Completed/Ongoing/In its early stages/Planned*

### 3.1 Appropriateness

8. I think the organization will benefit from this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
9. It doesn't make much sense for us to initiate this change. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
10. There are legitimate reasons for us to implement this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
11. This change will improve our organization's overall efficiency. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
12. There are several rational reasons for this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
13. In the long term, I believe it will be worth it for me if the organization adopts this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
14. This change will make my work easier. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
15. When this change is implemented, I don't believe I will gain anything from it. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
16. The time we spend on this change would be better spent on something else. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
17. This change aligns with our organization's priorities. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### 3.2 Management Support (Included the option: "I don't know" for responses)

18. Our senior leaders have encouraged us to embrace this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
19. The top decision-makers in our organization have fully supported this change effort. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
20. Every senior manager has emphasized the importance of this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
21. The highest leader in this organization is committed to this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

22. I feel like we're spending a lot of time on this change while senior managers don't even want it to happen. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
23. Management has sent a clear signal that this organization is going to change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### 3.3 Change efficacy

24. I don't expect to face any problems adapting to the work I'll have when this change is implemented. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
25. There are tasks needed for this change that I don't think I'll be able to perform well. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
26. When we implement this change, I feel confident I can handle it with ease. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
27. I have the skills needed to make this change successful. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
28. When I put my mind to it, I can learn everything needed for this change. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
29. My past experiences give me confidence that I will perform successfully after this change is implemented. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### 3.4 Personal Valence

30. I'm concerned that I will lose some of my status in the organization when this change is implemented. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
31. This change will disrupt many of the personal relationships I've built. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
32. My future in this position will be limited because of this change. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### 3.4 Organizational Culture Profile

*The following statements are about what you think is important at and in your work. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.*

- 33. I consider myself flexible in my work. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 34. I can adapt quickly to new situations at work. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 35. I appreciate stability in my work environment. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 36. I like predictability in my work. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 37. I like coming up with new innovative ideas. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 38. I take action quickly when new opportunities arise. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 39. I like to work independently. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 40. I like to work together in a team. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 41. I like to share information with colleagues. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 42. I value honesty at work. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 43. I respect the rights of my colleagues. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 44. I prefer an informal work atmosphere. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
- 45. I strive for good results. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

46. I want to continue to develop professionally. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
47. I believe good performance should be rewarded. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
48. Job security is important to me. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
49. I appreciate it when my work is praised. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
50. I enjoy working with others. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
51. I am willing to work long hours. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
52. I find it important to work in a socially responsible manner. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### 3.5 Change history

*The following statements are about your experiences with organizational change in your working life. Think back for a moment in your working life and all the changes you experienced in it.*

*Before this we asked you to think of a specific organizational change, now we want you to forget about it. Now think about **all** the organizational changes in your past. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.*

53. Previous organizational changes have been positive. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
54. My overall experiences with organizational changes in my working life have been positive. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
55. My general experience with organizational changes is that they are well-implemented. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
56. My general experience with past change initiatives is that they didn't achieve what they intended. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

57. Previous organizational changes were well-managed. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### 3.7 Openness to change

*The following statements are about the extent to which you are open to organizational changes in your work/job. Now think again about **all** the organizational changes in your past. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.*

58. I would consider myself to be "open" to changes to my work role. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
59. Right now, I am somewhat resistant to changes in my work (R). *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
60. I am looking forward to the implementation of changes in my work role. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
61. I am quite reluctant to consider changing the way I now do my work (R). *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
62. From my perspective, the implementation of changes in my work will be for the better. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*

### 3.8 Openness to experience

*The following statements are about the extent to which you are generally open to new experiences. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.*

63. I have a clear imagination. *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
64. I do not have a good imagination. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
65. I am not interested in abstract ideas. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*
66. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas. (R) *Strongly disagree/Disagree/Neither agree or disagree/Agree/Strongly agree*



67. Do you have any further comments or recommendations? Please share them below:

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You have reached the end of the survey. Thank you for your cooperation and contribution to this research!

If you are interested in the results of this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at:  
[m.s.weusthof@student.utwente.nl](mailto:m.s.weusthof@student.utwente.nl).

### Appendix 3 – Selection process of the OCP scale

These 20 values were specifically selected because they can be associated with one or more generations. For example, the value of being analytical was excluded as it cannot be distinctly linked to a specific generation. This selection process determined the final list of values.

Below is a table showing the 20 values chosen, linked to the relevant literature.

Value	Literature
Flexibility	Millennials and Gen Z place high importance on flexibility, particularly with respect to working hours (Lewis & Wescott, 2017).
Adaptability	Millennials and Gen Z are seen as adaptive due to their proficiency in technological skills (Bridges, 2015; Jones, 2017).
Stability	Baby Boomers value stability and job security, which aligns with their preference for predictable employment (Houlihan, 2008).
Predictability	Baby Boomers show a strong preference for structured and predictable work methods (Coultnner & Faulkner, 2014).
Being innovative	Millennials and Gen Z, both being technologically adept, prioritize workplace innovation (Mihelich, 2013; Murray, 2015).
Being quick to take advantage of opportunities	Generation X is typically goal-oriented and takes advantage of opportunities, while Millennials continually seek new avenues for growth (Bourne, 2009; Glass, 2007; Jones, 2017).
Autonomy	Both Generation X and Millennials value autonomy in their work (Ballone, 2007; Kaifi et al., 2012; Stanley, 2010).
Being team oriented	Millennials and Gen Z appreciate collaboration and teamwork (Bascha, 2011; Bridges, 2015; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009; Ferri-Reed, 2014; Haynes, 2011).
Sharing information freely	Millennials and Gen Z value open communication and transparency, especially in digital contexts (Coultnner & Faulkner, 2014; Kiranti et al., 2024; Schawbel, 2014).

Fairness	Across all the four generations, there is a shared emphasis on fairness and equality, particularly in diversity and inclusion policies (Houlihan, 2008; Jones, 2017).
Respect for the individual's right	Both Generation X and Millennials value personal rights and individual freedom (Stanley, 2010; Coultner & Faulkner, 2014).
Informality	There is a preference among Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z for informal and collaborative work environments (Bascha, 2011; Bridges, 2015; Ferri-Reed, 2014; Haynes, 2011; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009).
Achievement orientation	Generation X, Millennials and Gen Z strive for results and personal recognition (Bascha, 2011; Bourne, 2009; Ferri-Reed, 2014; Glass, 2007; Murray, 2015).
Opportunities for professional growth	Millennials and Gen Z actively seek career development opportunities, particularly in environments that promote continuous learning and development (Bascha, 2011; Bridges, 2015; Jones, 2017; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009).
High pay for good performance	Baby Boomers and Generation X value recognition for their hard work, with salary being perceived as an important form of acknowledgment (Coultner & Faulkner, 2014; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003; Kyles, 2005).
Security of employment	While Baby Boomers value job security and demonstrate loyalty to their employers (Houlihan, 2008), Generation X also values job security but is more willing to change jobs if conditions are unsatisfactory (Coultner & Faulkner, 2014; Lewis & Wescott, 2017).
Offers praise for good performance	Millennials and Gen Z place significant importance on receiving feedback and recognition for their achievements (Bascha, 2011; Ferri-Reed, 2014; Murray, 2015).

Working in collaboration with others	Millennials and Gen Z prefer working in teams and value an open, transparent work environment (Bascha, 2011; Bridges, 2015; Ferri-Reed, 2014; Haynes, 2011; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009).
Working long hours	Baby Boomers are associated with a strong work ethic, often being more willing to work longer hours (Coultnr & Faulkner, 2014).
Being socially responsible	Millennials and Gen Z prioritize social responsibility and sustainability as essential values (Kiranti et al., 2024; Jones, 2017; Schawbel, 2014).